2nd Copy

HENRY THE SECOND,

AN

HISTORICAL DRAMA,

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR OF

VORTIGERN.

London; Printed for J.Barker, Dramatic Repositary
Great Russell-Street,Covent Garden.

1799

ADVERTISEMENT

The Editor of the following sheets feels it a duty incumbent upon him,to lay before the public some particulars relative to the manner in which they came into his possession.

A considerable time after the play of Vortigern was produced he received from the hands of his son about four hundred lines of this play,in his own handwriting,and with than a solemn declaration,that they were faithfully copied from ancient and original papers; and that the remainder should be transcribed with all convenient speed.

The title and two other leaves only were produced of the oldMS.and these were asserted to be all that ever would appear in that state;the gentleman,i,e'.the supposed original proprietor of the papers,having expressed much dissatisfaction at the objections made by the public to the uncouthness of the orthography.

After frequent and urgent solicitation on the part pf the

Editor to receive the remainder of the play,and waiting many months,he at length obtained it from his son,with this apology;"that the gentleman who gave them was of a " capricious disposition,and would only suffer them to " be copied at certain times,when he was in the humour,"

With these representations,the Editor was obliged to remain satisfied,added to the repeated assurances of their being authentic,nor can he feel himself disposed to give implicit credit to any assertions that have been since made from the same quarter;as they stand in direct opposition to what had been before solemnly stated as facts.

The Editor here thinks it necessary,in order to prove his right in publishing this play,to state the following quotation from a letter written by his son,dated June 14. 1796, " As you have as yet no proof ut my parole for the " gift of Henry 11.I now tell you that I beg your acceptance " of the publication of Vortigern,and the whole of the pro- " fits of Henry 11."

This piece is here given almost verbatim from the MS. which is not divided into Acts,nor in many places is any punctuation attended to.The lines in this play,as well as in Vortigern,are numerated,and in many places erroneously.

Of its merits the Editor has never intimated an opinion,but he is encourafed by that of others better enabled to form a judgment,and by their approbation is emboldened to lay it before the public.One circumstance

relative to this production he thinks necessary to advert to,as it may possibly at a future day lead to some further knowledge of the true history of this as well as the other papers.

Some months after this play was produced,the Editor accidentally met with a passage in the Biographia Dramatica,of which the following is an extract: "Henry 1. and Henry 11. " by Wm.Shakespeare and Rob.Davenport. In the books of the " Stationers Company,the 9th.of Sept.1653,an entry is made " of the above title;but what species of the drama it was, " or whether one or two performances,are facts not ascertained. "Whatever it might be,it suffered at the general havoc made " by Mr.Warburton's servant."

The Editor has examined this entry,which was made by Humphry Mosely,a bookseller of that period,and finds it correctly stated, but with the following additional plays entred by the same person,and on the same day,viz:- "The "History of Cardenio,by Mr.Fletcher and Shakespeare, "and the "Merry Devill of Edmonton,by Wm.Shakepeare."

On enquiry,he is credibly informed by those who knew Mr.Warburton above mentioned,that a fire happened at his house in the neighbourhood of Fleet-street,about 36 years ago,and destroyed his effects,amongst which were many o books and MSS.

When the fact above related was mentioned by the Editor

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The Editor has mentioned this entry, which was made by Humphry Moseley, a bookseller of that period, and finds it correctly stated, but with the following additional plays entered by the same person, and on the same day, viz:- "The "History of Cardenio, by Mr. Fletcher and Shakespeare. "and the "Merry Devill of Edmonton, by Mr. Shakespeare."

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When the Pack above related was mentioned by the Editor

to his son, he expressed much surprise and satisfaction observing that" he presumed the world would now no longer "entertain a doubt of the validity of the papers." This circumstance, added to the general appearance on the face of the MSS. of their having been scorched by fire, gave additional weight to their supposed originality, and fuller confidence to the Editor, in his intention of laying those plays plays before the world. As this is probably the last time he may ever have occasion to address the public on the subject of these mysterious papers, so long a matter of controversy with them, and of unspeakably inconvenience to himself, he thinks it necessary here to declare, that he has had no intercourse or communication with the cause of all this public and domestic misfortune, for near three years, the period at which the party alludedvto quitted his house, except one meeting had at the request and in the presence of Mr. Albany Wallis, of Norfolk-street.

At this meeting for the first time the party above-mentioned declared himself the author of all the papers, and that he was about publishing the same to the world.

Of the truth of this declaration the public will form their opinion; but let that opinion be what it may, the Editor here most solemnly reiterates his protestation, that all sources of information that have ever reached him on the subject of these papers, he has unreservedly communicated to the public; of whom he asks that only to which he feels

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If the truth of this declaration the public will form their opinion; let them opinion so what it may, the Editor here most solemnly protests in his probability, that all surmise of information that have ever reached him on the subject of these papers, he has uprightly communicated to the public; or when he's asks that only to which he feels

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

KING HENRY THE SECOND

RICHARD)
JOHN } HIS SONS
HENRY)

THOMAS BECKET.

THEOBALD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

LORD DE CLIFFORD

ROBERT, EARL OF LEICESTER

HUGH, EARL OF CHESTER

ROGER MOWBRAY

JOHN DE SALISBURY

NICHOLAS BREAKSPEARE

WILLIAM, KING OF SCOTLAND

QUEEN ELEANOR

ROSAMOND, DAUGHTER TO LORD DE CLIFFORD

NURSE TO ROSAMOND

SIR HUGH MORVELE)
SIR REGINALD BERTSON)THE 4 KNIGHTS WHO SLEW
SIR WILLIAM TRACY) BECKET
SIR RICHARD BRYTO)

and knows he is justly and honestly entitled, viz:- to be considered by them as in honour and honesty utterly incapable, in every character either as associate or principal, of intentional imposture, or of laying before them papers, as genuine, which, whatever they may be, he did not believe to be of that description.

(Where italics occur in the printed book they are indicated in this copy by underlining. G.H.L.)

HENRY THE SECOND

ACT I. SCENE 1. FRANCE.

The English Camp and a Castle besieged -K. Henry, Hugh, Earl of Chester, Robert, Earl of Leister, and Roger Mowbray- Soldiers etc.

HENRY

SAY noble Chester ! have yet mine Heralds

From out their brazen and long neck'd trumps,

Spoke English thunder to these dastard French,

And hail'd their quick surrender of this fort ?

Or will they ruffle Harry's smiling brow,

And by denial dare him to a siege ?

Ches. Dread Sir, they here attend your will.

Hen. Then let the English lions roar !

Heralds sound

Officer answers from the Castle.

Off. Speak ! Who are ye that do crave this parley ?

And with such loud and bellowing clangor

You'd from death's sleep, awaken us to hear?

Hen. Unfurl my vanner let it wave on high.
That it reflect the bloody colour'd coat

Of England's lions rampant,

Upon yonder meagre looking Frenchman.

'Tis I ! Harry bids ye to surrender !

Off. Then let proud Harry know,we'll stand the siege,

'Fore God we swore allegiance to our King.

Hen. Am not I Plantagenet ?son of Maude

Who daughter was to noble Harry First,

And he third son of Norman William !

Who is't then,will dare usurp my title ?

Off. King Lewis of France !

Hen. Then short-mantled Harry bids ye beware !

For as the tigress,when stirr'd from her whelp,

Will piece-meal tear the intruding hunter

So is't with me,if low'ring on these smiles

Ye rouse the dunny spirit of revenge.
A Horn without
Whence is that sound ?

Lei. 'I'm a messenger my liege,

Who comes in haste with letters to your grace.
Messenger enters

Mess. This paequet is from Theobald Archbishop of Canterbury.

This from your noble peers;and lastly,this from

Lady Eleanor your Queen.

Hen. Come last,and yet far sweetest of them all.
(Reads)
"Though short my letter,yet do I know my

"Harry's love will think it sweeter far,than

"All others -In brief your pacquets do relate,

"That Stephen hath breathed his last in th' Abbey

"Of Dover - your people all await to hail you King.

"But I the most desire to see thee,for O! my

"Harry,mine is the call of eager love,

"Thine Eleanor"

Thanks!- and yet it accts not that I should thank.
O! Stephen,living, thou didst wrong me much,

Usurping both my crown and dignity;

And in the face of God,didst break that oath,

Which truely to my mother thou did'st swear;

Yet for all this,do I now pity thee,

For thou standst 'fore a great,all piercing judge !
Whose even hand,the scale of justice bears,

Whose all commanding eye,fathoms the soul

Searches e'en to the very thought of sin,

And proves himself at once a mighty God,

Wonderful and incomprehensible !

So then by death,I now do gain a crown,

By death must lose it,isn't so good lord ?

Lois.Aye,an't please your grace.

Hen.Why look thou how this same death doth scoff us,

Cozening our minds with sweet delusive thoughts,

Binding round our temples,the glitt'ring crown,

Whilst we (short witted fools)accept the task,

Dream but of smiles,look out for golden joys;

Now mark the chastisement of our conceits,

Thisregal gem becomes a galling thorn,

Treason,and a whole catalogue of ills,
That are attendant on a kingly state,
Rush in upon our frail bark of nature,
Buffet us to and fro,with the fell blast,
Which like a meagre chatt'ring ague fit,
Turns our stern manhoods into peevish fear,
Sours the full tide of sweet with bitterness,
Till lastly tired with this dalliance,
The wick of life quite dwindled and bewasted,
We lay us down,beg only ground enough
To sink a grave,then groan and welcome death.

Ches. Prithee,my good lord,stand not so pensive,
Hood not thus your face within your mantle,
You speak out of death ! whose grinning visage
So oft times you have dared in bloody fight.

Hen. No more,no more,give me your pardons,all,
I muse too long --- O! Almighty father,
Since your dread pleasure be to crown me king,
I do accept the trust, (kneels) But hear my vow;
Shou'd I in discharge of this great office,
Either through sickness,age,or foul mouth'd lie,
Be led from out the right course of justice,
Then shall I hope for mercy at your hand;
But if willingly I do fail,give me
Judgment,O give me death,lessoI crave not,

Leic. Wer't not well,my lord,you ship for England,
Stephen hath friends yet left ?

Mow. Yea,truly ! full well we know,how fickle,
Light and inconstant are the people's loves.

Hen. Well ! be they as they may,I will not budge,
England shall hence forth be at my command,
Spight of those haughty spirits that will dare
To cross me most in that which is my right;
And so shall these intruding Frenchmen too,
Ere I go hence.

Ches. Be advis'd my lord,this delay ——

Hen. Sound ! I say,I will nought of council hear,
What ! have my course obstructed by this molehill,
This petty fort,mann'd with such palsied curs,
Such ravenous lean back'd hounds,whose looks disgrace
The jollied prisoner that awaits to hear
The solemn judgment pass'd upon his life;
I'do not give fifty,fifty ! nay not five
Of those,my sturdy bow-men,for a world
of such loons. Prithee !look how they do peep
Like craz'd and blinking owls from out their nests,
Shrinking at sight of the tow'ring eagle,
Draw,archers,draw your arrows to their steels,
(Trumpet from the Castle)

Off. What are your offers ?

Hen. Ope wide your gates,surrender to our wills,
Therein you'll 'scape the rod of correction.

Off. Sire,we submit,and lay us at your mercy.

Hen. 'Tis well !

Hen. For.the lion knows where to deal vengeance,

Where to show mercy.

(Gates open)

Come Lords ! lets in,dispatch our letters straight,

Then ship for England !

Exeunt.

SCENE IN LONDON
A ROOM

Enter Becket

Beck. Why thus and thus it is,the matter argu'd,

Both parts justly weigh'd and well consider'd,

Judgment too given,with no partial tongue,

Will speak this verdict ——

Happiness with ambition bears no kin,

For thus,content dwells not with ambition,

And he who lacks content,lacks happiness;

This lab'ring mind then tells me,tou'd be happy,

Yet whispers,I wou'd fain be greater too;

Peace ! thou vile intruding mass of folly !

Thou'dst willingly embrace two properties

Who bear such hatred and dread enmity,

That soon they'd kindle,blaze and burn thee up,

Of one then make thy choice,more thou can'st not;

Give me then greatness— hath not fortune bow'd

Stoop'd,cring'd,yea kneel that I shou'd raise her up,

For what was Becket,but a poor man's son ?

That walks the common vulgar road of life,

Dies,when dead,is lost and quite forgotten.

What is Becket now ? the friend of Theobald !

Who ranks in station and in dignity,

Next to the King himself,yea,and more too,

For he doth bear the crown of Holy Church.

Is king and lord over the souls of men,

And not of earthly matters,the frail judge.

(Enter a Messenger)

Whence come you,Sir ?

Mess. From Theobald,who now is on his road from Canterbury

hither.He had me speed before,and to yourself deliver

this letter.

(Messenger goes out)

(Becket reads)

Beck."As I do tender thee Becket,most dearly,

"and fain wou'd bring thee to quick advancement,

"I do hereby greet thee with the title of Archdeacon

"of my Church,more shall be thine ere long.Thou know'st

"the King will soon be here,and if I can serve the aught

"there too,thou may'st command me,

Thine Theobald"

What ! even so,Archdeacon of my Church,

Aye,and if my sensies do not mock me,

More shall be thine ere long,so went the tune,

And in conclusion,"Thou may'st command me"

Now,Becket,say to thyself,wou'd'st be poor ?

Wou'd'st shun ambition,wou'd'st spurn at greatness,

No ! no ! thou'rt an hungred,and I'le feed thee.

Off then,vile suit ! go cover filthy knaves,

That know to cringe whene'er the great man frowns;

Henceforth be thou stubborn,proud and haughty,
If majesty do frown ! knit thou thy brow,
If he do smile,why then,be thou placid;
Yet always,bear in mind thy dignity.
But hold !who is't comes hither to lord me ?
Brave Harry !proud and haughty too as I,
Noble his spirit ,as his mind is great;
Distant to those who most he doth esteem,
Yea,in so much,that no man e'er cou'd say,
I was the friend,the favour'd of my Prince;
If so,Becket,how compass thy great ends ?
Shame,thou fickle mind,wilt thou flag at last ?
Doth not the seaman,for some hundred marks,
Plough the rude waves,and in a little case,
Scarce bigger in compass than a needle's eye
When floating on this wond'rous element,
Doth he not risk both health and life to boot,
And shall Becket be afraid? fye !shame on't !
O ! attend then each organ of the soul,
Hear thy stern lord's peremptory decree,
And on thy coronet grave thou these words:
If Becket lives,then lives he in greatness;
If not,why then content,will Becket die,
Life,sans renown,avthing so lowly is,
That dusky oblivion were sweeter far.

Enter John De Salisbury, afterwards Becket's Secretary.

Beck. How now, what news, good Salisbury ?

Salis. The noble Henry, by express we learn,

Is landed on the Welsh coast.

Beck. So soon ?

Salis. Most truly, Sir, and it should seem as if,

The roaring surge were proud to bear him up,

Afar the waves com tow'ring towards his ship,

And dipt his pendant in the wat'ry clouds;

At length, quite hoarse, they ow'd their stubborn backs,

Crook'd their pointed tops, then seem dissolving,

Bath'd and fondled the tough and well ~~fi-n~~ rib'd bark,

In plains of milky and thick spangled foam,

The blanket sails swell'd as though they wou'd crack

And shiver the twisted cords that held them,

Both winds and waves in amity were leagu'd,

And strove who most cou'd aid his homeward course,

Beck. Comes he to London ?

Salis. Aye ! And purposes his coronation straight.

Beck. Then Heaven grant, as he is brave and just,

That in uprightness, he rule his people,

And 'fore all, that he in no wise usurp

The high and sacred rights of holy church !

Salis. Fear him not, Sir.

Beck. But I do fear, and much, let me tell thee;

Good Salisbury ! I have observed thee well,

Beck. In fasting,in prayer,and in merriment,
And find thee patient,devout,and sober,
A man as 'twere,purg'd of earthly sin,
Upon whose soul blest virtue stamp'd her seal,
And mark'd it for her own;
One,to whose care,I wou'd intrust the key
That thou might'st read the secrets of my soul,
Prithee to me, bow not obedience !
I am not wont to let my tongue speak praise,
When my whole mind bears it not company.

Salis. So great is the praise,I so unworthy,
That should I strive to answer as I ought,
My simple tongue wou'd mar my wish to thank you.

Beck. Let the desire suffice,then for the act;
Long have I laboured to reward thy truth,
And now that fortune hath advanced me high,
And placed her budding branch within my hand,
I will pluck off one tender flow'r or twain
Which nourish'd under my aspiring sun,
Shall bloom and carpet out thy walk of life,
With tissu'd and thick embroider'd honours.
Henceforth,then be thou Becket's Secretary !
Who now is titled Theobald's Archdeacon.

Salis. How,my good Sir ?

Beck. Aye,and hath a voice,will plead in's behalf,
Prithee,o'erlook this paper !

Balis. In faith,'tis even so.

Beck. Too long we tarry,come let's away,

And greet the noble Theobald who ere this,

Is safe arriv'd at Westminster.

SCENE IN WALES
LORD DE CLIFFORD'S CASTLE.
Enter Rosamond with a Book.

Rosa. Wherefore,shou'd I thus read the works of man ?

Is not thy eye , O! nature,sweeter far;

Can all the sound and studied argument,

Of the high sppeech of proud philosophy

Raise in this mind such grand,such heavenly thoughts,

As the bright East,where the hot blazing sun,

How mounting upwards ~~gains~~ 'gins his daily course,

Staining the firmament with crimson hue,

Or wou'd ye blur a thousand,thousand leaves,

You ne'er cou'd speak?of beauty half so well

As yonder hyacinth !whose leaf is fring'd

With the big glitt'ring drop of chrystal dew,

That trembles,moistens,and now melts away,

Farewell thou blotted page,I'll read no more.

(Enter Henry and Mowbray.)

But who comes here,'twere best I should retire.

Hen. Stay ! sweetest lady,I conjure thee,stay,

O fly not thus like nimble footed stag !

But chance,thou art some fairy of the morn,

Gathering a Christ thorn or pretty night shade,

To fill thine evening incantation up.

Rosa. What shou'd I do ?

Hen. Mowbray,an thou lov'st me look not on her,
For if thou do'st,thou'll burn with that same fire
That I do now, So prithee leave me straight.

Mow. My gracious Sir,be not over rash.

Hen. Leave me,I charge thee,and quickly too.

Mow. I must obey ——
O grant this morning,which now looks so bright,
Prove not hereafter Harry's blackest night.

Hen. Speak,what art thou ? of women the most fair.

Rosa. I am daughter,Sir, of Lord de Clifford,
My name is Rosamond.

Hen. O, that I cou'd mellow this iron tongue,
And fashion it to music of soft love,
But so it is,from my childhood,upwards,
I have been bred in hearse and jarring war,
My bud of youth,within a camp was spent;
There have I sat upon a soldier's knee,
Whil'st round my neck was twined a giant arm
So toughly sat,that one might say,indeed,
The sinews that did work it were of brass;
There 'twas I learnt the soldier's untun'd song,
The morning onset,and the bloody fray,
Here coursed the bristly main'd and foaming steed,
With fire spitting eye,and trampling hoof !
Upon whose back bestrode an English knight!

Hen. .Unnumber'd were the youths of France he slew,
Of Bourbon's sons,or Orlean's proud heirs !
How many pedigrees and otes d'armures
Beneath his mighty arm were blotted out ?
Whilst smoaking from their horses flanks,ran down
The blood of all their proud nobility.
Then wou'd he tell,how long the fight did last,
Frm six i'the morn till evening clocks told eight,
How then they bore from off the blood-stain'd field,
Their clay-cold fathers,brothers,countrymen;
Here wou'd they pause awhile,
For memory did whisper pleasures past,
Till I,with childish innocence looked up
And bid them to go on,but O ! the fight
Turn'd towards Heaven,where their glitt'ring eyes,
Whilst the big tears from off their rugged chins,
Rain'd down upon my young and beardless face;
I wou'd have chid silence,but cou'd not;
For if such sturdy hearts as theirs cou'd melt,
Why then methought,there must e cause indeed.
This Lady,was my school,thus was I taught,
And if such tales can please thy tender ear,
Rough and unpolish'd,as most true they are,
Behold the man will sit the live-long day,
Of ling'ring sieges,marchings,battles fell,
Where thirsty Mars to glut have been with blood

Hen. That sick'ning appetite yearn'd out. - No more !

Rosa. I pray you ,Sir,accept a maiden's thanks;

Your phrase so aptly paints the tale you tell,

It out proclaims you soldier,that you are.

(Enter Nurse)

Nurse My gentle mistress,my sweet lady,rare news,

Rare news !

Rosa. How Nurse ?

Nurse. In sooth,I lack breath,but tell me,pretty Rose,~~where~~ n

where hast been,sweetheart ?by my faith,I have sought

thee a long hour,O ! me,

A man,come away lady,he hath a vile wicked look?withal

Hen. Truly,Nurse,do'st think so dame ?

Nurse. Aye,marry do I,why look ye Lady, I'le be sworn to't

then,why his wickedness hangeth at's eye,as doth they

ivy bush at wine sellers door. O ! the rogue.

Rosa. Silence,Nurse,I beseech thee,silence.

Nurse. O ! thou sad dancing eye,'thou wicked piper,but I will

stop thy cheating music,marry will I. Come lady,you

must to your father straight.

Rosa. Farewel,Sir.

Nurse. Aye,go too,vile man,go mend thyself,farewel.

(Exeunt)

Hen. Yet one word more,! nay gone ! then fare thee well !

Sweet Rose of England,blushing innocence,

Farewel ! to Harry's peace alike farewel !

For what avails my crown,or kingly pow'r,

My look majestical,commanding awe,

Hen..My armin'd rose,my sceptre-griping hand,

My golden throne,my fretted canopy,

My pliant court,and all this show of pomp,

What avails these,when peace,sweet peace is gone ?

But now Harry was himself;was a King !

How chang'd his high condition! now a slave !

This England and the million souls therein,

All cou'd this my little brain encompass;

And now the veriest peasant in my land,

Is in his mind,a God compar'd to me;

For I am slave to love,and what is love ?

As ever burning and consuming fire,

A gnawing viper in the heart,a thorn

Upon the nightly pillow -- Envy

To sleep,that under semblance of cold death

Seeks all our cares in soft oblivion.

(Enter Mowbray)

Now is't Mowbray that thus you dare intrude

And rudely break upon our meditation ?

Your absence wou'd better have becomed you.

Mow. I meant not to offend your grace,

Hen. Why truly Mowbray I believe thee honest !

But well thou know'st how peevish men do grow,

When all within is not at ease,

But to thine errand,what wou'd'st thou with-us ?

Mow.The Lord de Clifford greets your safe return,

And loyally doth tender you his love;

Mow. He hath moreover pray'd your grace t'accept

His goods and Castle to your present use.

Hen. Stands he number'd with those that have been ours?

Mow. Yea, for he oppos'd th'ambitious Stephen.

Hen. Why then we do receive his proffer'd love,

And for this night, we title him our host.

Tomorrow we must on towards London.

Mow. I shall make known your royal pleasure.

Hen. Why do so— and tell the Earl of Chester

And Lord Robert that I wou'd see them straight,

Look that you also bear them company.

& (Exeunt)

A STREET IN LONDON.

(Two gentlemen meeting)

Ist. Gent. Wil't please you tell if the King pass this way.

2nd Gent. In faith I wou'd instruct kind Sir, but lack the means-

you beg an answer where I myself wou'd fain have question'd

Ist. Gent Goes he not to Westminster ?

2nd. Gent. So I have veard by the way, by one of Theobald's gentlemen,

who further did instruct me of his coronation

Ist. Gent. Will it be long ere that?

2nd. Gent. Tomorrow by twelve o'th' clock.

Ist. Gent. If report bely him not, he lacks nor wisdom, nor courage.

2nd. Gent. Of that methinks the French can give us better account.-

(Drums without and shouting.)

So then we have not lost our labour, Sir, the clamorous

and o'er joy'd people give note of his approach.

Ist. Gent. We will if it please you retire from out the common

way and thereby 'scape the crowd

2nd.Gent.Most willingly. (Exeunt)

Enter King Henry,Earl of Leicester,Mowbray,Lord de Clifford, Soldiers and People shouting,-

Peo. Long live King Henry !God save King Henry !Long live the King.—

Hen. My friends and citizens ! I thank ye all !

Not as a King,but as an Englishman

And brother.We are all children alike,

One earth doth nourish us,one only blood

Runs through our veins,animates our bodies,

And is in property so passing rare,

It stamps ye on this earth so many gods,

From every nation,bring me forth one soul,

Place too an Englishman among the rest,

And if he carry not the mark so strong

That I do single him,and him alone,

May I ne'er look for happiness to come.

My English hearts,my loving countrymen,

When in the fertile plains of Normandy,

My harrass'd soldiers have surrounded been,

With French,that number'd wou'd make five times ours,

When this gay glitt'ring troop we had attack'd,

Routed and broken down;not even then

Cou'd all my joy for such a victory,

Give half the pleasure that I now do feel,

In finding thus my people at the last,

True to their God,their country and their King

Peo. Long live the King ! God save the King !long live King .
(Trumpet sounds)

Enter Queen Eleanor,withPrince Richard and John her son.

Ele. Where,where is my love ?where is my husband ?

Hen. Here,my Nell,come to thy Harry's arms;
(kisses her)
Dost love me still,has't not forget me jade ?

Ele. In forgetting thee my Harry,I shou'd

Forget myself !forget indeed to breathe !

For thee I live;thou art my dearest half,

O ! how cou'd I bear this life without thee ?

Rich. My honour'd father !

John. My long lost parent !

Hen. Rise honest Dick,how fares it my good John ?

Thy father's blessings light upon ye both :-
(embraces them)
Now let's on my Nell,for I lack rest !

And for the morrows sun that rising will heap

Labours on our head,we'll be prepar'd.

Look Lords,you hold yourselves in readiness,

For 'tis our fixed intent that we be crown'd

On the morrow,by twelve,at Westminster;

Be this proclaim'd throughout our city !

And see moreover,that every hall

Be stock'd with viands,that so our people

May share with us the joy of such a day.

Thy hand sweet Nell !come my Sons let's on.
(Drums beat (Exeunt)
People shout)

.SCENE WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Enter King Henry,Queen Eleanor,Prince Richard,Prince John, Theobald,Leicester,Chester,Mowbray,Lord de Clifford,Earls, Barons,Bishops,Heralds,according to their Didnities.

Hen. I pray thee,Theobald,is there not a place
Now vacant here,that must ere we proceed
Be fill'd ? I mean our seat of Chancellor.

Theo. Why truly noble Sir, there is,

Hen.Then mark me,Theobald.Thou art worn in years,
And cou'd inform us,where to make our choice,
Wil'tplease ye,do so ?

Theo.Humbly I thank your Grace,for singling me
As fitting,now to offer such a m)n
One Becket I well know,a goodly clerk,
Whom late for sundry virtues he possessed,
I did advance unto the dignity
Of mine Archdeacon.

Hen.'T'is enough,bring him before us straight !
If thou do'st know him worthy such a place,
We'll not question further,but single him
To fill our empty seat,bring him before us !
(Enter Becket)
Why,truly,he hath a comely figure !-
And likes me well,thy hand my good Becket.
Take thou this place,and henceforth know thyself
Our just and true appointed Chancellor.

Beck.What gratitude remains in Becket's breast,
Shall ever toil to prove his earnest love,
And show him worthy your present bounty.

Hen. Not unto me thy gratitude thou ow'st,

But unto Theobald here,'tis he alone

Thou ought'st to thank,therefore I charge thee,friend,

That which to Caesar 'longs to Caesar give,

If after,thou'd'st please me,I'll tell thee how

With justice,and with truth,thine office fill,

Deal with my people as befits a man,

And more I ask not.Now,let us be crowned.
(They crown him in form,and all the ~~nobility~~ nobles hail him by the title of Henry ll.King of Engl and)
My good Archbishop !prithee tell me now,

Is it ought save form,or must I wear this ?
(Holding his finger up to the crown)

Thee. 'Tis but the form,my liege,thus being crowned,

You may or wear it,or straight pluck it off.
(he takes it off)

Hen. Then bear it hence !

'Tis not weighty enough for my beaver

Neither fits it so easy as my cap;

Bring hither my bonnet !
(They bring it,he puts it on,and rises from his seat)
My gracious lords ! had I not wherewithall

To pay in part,the debt I owe you now,

I ne'er cou'd thus have knelt to take a crown,

And kepp the blush of shame from off my cheek;

For on my shoulders you have heap'd a deot,

A mighty debt! a crown and kingdom too !

And for the same,thus have I now to offer -
(They bring two maps)
This roll doth show you England as it stood,

Hen. When Harry First,my grandsire,reign'd your King;

And this poor dwindled map,now marks ye out,

How your domainsdid stand in Stephen's time,

Which now I blush indeed to look upon !

And thus at once do cancel and make void.
(Throws it on the ground)
In its place I restore again the first,
(Takes it up and lays it down again)
And add thereto the whole of Picardy,

Anjou,and part of fertile Poietiers !

Besides one hundred fourscore thousand marks,

Which we now place within our treasury.

Thee. My tongue alone shall speak your people's thanks

Additions such as these do counterpoise

The crown with which you are invested now.

Hen. O wou'd my task were ended here !but no,-

A judgment must be utter'd ere we part

In words so heavy,and so rude in sound,

As make my very heart indeed to weep.

Now Leicester ! bring hither that selfsame roll,

Which late in France we did think meet to pen.
(Leicester rises from his seat and delivers it
then returns to his place again)
Though well the seats around here are filled,

Yet some there are that naked do apear,

Lacking their noble owners. Where is't ?

What silent all ! then by your leave I'll speak.
(Holds up the roll which Leicester gives him)
Herein is catalogued of all our Peers,

The titles and their seperate dignities,

.Hen. Of whom the greater part to us seem true;

Yet damned treason hath been meddling here

And smear'd the names of some we tender'd most;

Where is Earl Ranulph ? where's the Lord Ftzhugh ?

Lord John,Lord Owen;and the Lord Fitz Urse,

Besi[illegible] (The Knights and orders of less note,

That [illegible] plac[illegible] be present ? Why answer they not ?

Theo. We wou'd, but dare not plead in their behalfs.

Hen. Be it made known,the five we here did name

Guilty of blackest treason,we pronounce ! -

For,that they did 'gainst me their lawful King,

With hell-hatch'd treason,wantonly conspire !

Aiding the proud ambitious Stephen !

If one of them within our realm be found,

On him an hundred marks we will bestow,

That,or alive or dead,brings him before us;

As for the rest,that rather were drawn in,

(for that their betters led them on the way)

Our gracious pardon unto such we grant !

But we shall tent them close;if they do flinch,

Why then they look for mercy but in death !

Now let the drum and trumpet speak our joy,

The rest be feasting,mirth and revelry.

(Takes Eleanor's hand,they retire in the order in which they entered)

A CHAMBER

(Enter Becket alone)

Beck. The child that hath enough, will mewl for more.
We from the cradle then are still the same,
Eager to climb ambition's golden tree,
Looking out upward to the topmost branch;
Nor thinking once, if back we wou'd return.
That we the boughs have bent, and broken so,
That there is out to go on and gain the point.
Or headlong we must totter down again.
How set my roots now I am Chancellor ?
Why well ! yet some there are that envy me,
And will do much to pluck them from my back !
Am I then firm ? is every bough beneath
Unbent, unbroken ? I wou'd they were so !
But I to mine own use have placed monies
That 'long not unto me, but to the King.
That's the branch I so hard have borne upon !
'Tis there ! I cannot answer to the charge;
What matters it ? I still am with my Prince,
The cherish'd and unrival'd favourite !
By holy church, I do defy them all !
And thou intruding Mowbray, have a care !
Busy Lord Clifford look thou to thyself !
Or at one blow, I will cut short your buds !
Then as the flower that's plucked, I'll leave ye both
To droop and wither, hang your heads and die.

(Enter Salisbury)

Beck. Whence come you Salisbury ?

Salis. From Theobald !-

Whose age and sickness brings him nigh to death !

So fain would on the instant speak with you,

Beck. I'll to him straight !

But tell me whither is the King ?

Salis. Himself with Mowbray and the Lord de Clifford

Are gone to hunt at Woodstock, as I hear.

Beck. Is not the Queen gone thither too ?

Salis. No ! my lord.

Beck. Depart so soon, and leave fair Ellen here !

What think'st thou good Salisbury ? Is't not strange ?

Salis. Sir, It lieth not in me to 'solve the matter !

Beck. At leisure, we'll look further into this -

'Tis not meet to tarry now, so follow me !

(Exeunt)

WOODSTOCK BOWER

(Henry and Rosamond)

Hen. O, wherefore love, do'st change complexion thus ?

I charge thee, I do beseech thee, fear not !

Wer't not that thine eyes are twp lustrous stars,

And pierce the knotted bow'rs that enround thee,
Wer't not for those lips breathing perfumes so sweet,

That men will haunt around this spot to know

Whence such things come, O ! wer't not for all these,

I'd tell thee love, and truly too, thou'rt safe !

And secret from the piercing eye of man.

Rosa. Indeed it were too soon to leave your Queen !

Your absence will engender in her mind

Some dark suspicion,which may ripen straight,

And bring forth jealousy,despair and rage !

Let not thus your heated blood o'ercome you !

Be rul'd 'twere better for both of us.

I will be thy jailor,love and bind thee

With forest flow'rs,feed thee with my kisses !

So thou wilt be rul'd by mony Harry !

Hen. Would I were a God !

That yielding,I might honour more my chains !

I am content,do with me as thou wilt.

(Horn sounds without)

This is the signal --'tis Mowbray comes !

(Enter Mowbray)

Hall, Mowbray !what news ?

Mow. A messenger from Becket is arriv'd !

The brings sad tidings o'th' good old Theobald.

Hen. Alas ! what of him ?

Mow. 'Tis thought my liege,he'll not live out the day.

Hen. My good old friend,my honest Counseller.

Must I now lose thee ? must we part so soon ?

To horse then Mowbray ! I'll follow thee.

(Mowbray goes out)

Adieu,my love !farewell my Rosamond

(Kisses her)

Rosa.That kiss was ~~tame~~ thine,my Harry,and so sweet

It seem'd as it wou'd swallowe one of mine !

Hen. Then give it love !

(She kisses him)

Rosa. Thine ! will I keep so close within my lips,

A zephyr shall not dare intrude upon't !

Hess. Then thou return'st, I'll give it back again.

Hen. Farewell ladies !

Exit.

A CHAMBER.

(Thoeald in a Bed sleeping,- Becket seated by him.)

Beck. The dying man, that can thus sweetly sleep,

Must wear a soul within this outward flesh.

That knows no sin - how gently heaves his breast,

All cover'd with the silky snow-white beard;

He smiles as if an angel kiss'd his lips,

And whisper'd him of joys that were to come !

Great soul thou hast an everlasting seat,

A throne in Heav'n above. Cou'd men but look,

And see a sight like this, they were all blest !

Sin wou'd grow out of date, wou'd be forgot !

(Enter Henry)

Hen. How does the good old man ?

(Becket rises)

Beck. He sleeps my liege !

Hen. And looks as sweet as my new-born babe !

Methinks the register of men's bad acts

Bears not one stain from any deed of thine:

And if it did, thou hast been penitent,

And dropp'd so many tears for the offence,

That clean the blot is wash'd away; O ! joy,

To find that virtue hath so much reward,

As thus to smile even on death itself

That angel, who ranks first in Heav'n above,

Ham. Can only tell her happiness is gone !
For such a place it is that here must fill.
Soft the moves, my good old heart, now flies it ?

Iago. Out ! my King, or sovereign hence! an Sir,
As one that from a gentle sleep awakes
To old forsaken those on earth is lovely;
And lay his soul upon the lap of peace,
Until this sweet into eternal sleep.
Ha yes, I have a faithful service been.
And toil's those near yearning on this seat,
If ought I at your hands have merited.
I claim and'd crave a boon , are I go hence.

Ham. Thou must it.Tell it I beseech thee.

Iago. Invent good Hamlet, with those dignities
That straight I shall give up into your Grace.

Ham. By holy thou ! I swear it shall be done.

Iago. Approach sir,Hamlet, I have been your friend !
Can take a friend's last parell - There's my tale !
Love has also endowed a greater skill;
Whilst on this earth thou wert his friend of me,
And assign thy loyal services this in sin,
Until I charge that he will release thee forth,
Yes will love that for it , God will have that forth.
That have I done,--that I.! assure of pride,
For thou was's wilding,and gone into exile.
If thou dost find on Ulpes sir within,

Theo. Look back to what thou wast, and be content;

Remember this, and then thou art most happy.

Beck. I shall Sir.

Theo. I would my liege a little more with you,

But no ! I cannot - O ! Heav'n ! Heav'n !
(Dies)

Hen. Yet stay awhile - 'Tis done - all's over.

This body late possess'd with faculties,

How motionless ! those lips that moved but now,

To utter music such as angels do,

Quite still ! one little sigh bore hence his soul

Inthe highest heav'n - Come sorrow !

For as I press this hand my tears shall flow,

Bearing like company with my kisses.

Beck. Adieu, my friend ! my Theobald !
(The King rises from the bed.)

Hen. The care of his interment shall be thine !

As owing most thou best can honour him.

Beck. I shall see it done my liege

Hen. Follow me now, for I wou'd speak with thee.
(Looking back to the bed)
Farewel, my Theobald ! farewel for ever,
(Exeunt)

(Enter Queen Eleanor)

Ele. Is't that my looks are channel'd with old age,
grown
My body crook'd, or that my minds ~~gone~~ sour ?

Am I Queen Ellen, Harry's lawful wife ?

Why yes ! and yet it should seem 'twere not so,

Where lies my offence ? am I barren ? No.-

Have I then borne but women children ? Yes !

Ele. Men I have brought forth ! what wills he more ?

Wherefore shou'd he thus leave me,Imknow not;

And in sooth I must sit calmly down

And weep his absence;were this the woman ?

No; I'll chase him home,by Heav'n I will.
(Enter Prince Richard)
Well,my Richard,where hast been my son ?

Rich. I parted now with John de Salisbury,

Who did instruct me of sad tidings,

Ele. What sayest thou ?

Rich. Theobald,that good old man, alas !is dead.

Ele. Then peace to his departed soul.
(Enter Prince John)
John. I will not speak of what thou know'st already.

Ele. I from thy brother heard the heavy news !

But tell me who dost think will fill his place ?

Rich. Our Chancellor,the goodly Becket.

John. So have I heard,by desire of Theobald,
The dying dii requesit of our father.

Ele. Thy father,sayest thou ?

John. Yes.

Ele. Hath he then been to London ?

John. Aye,and is ere this at Woodstock.

Ele. Leave me awhile ! -
(Exeunt the Princes)
What ! hither come;return'd too,and not see me !

For dying Theobald thou cou'd'st quit thy sport,

And leave the chase;but for me ! 'twere too much !

O ! 'tis some other pastime takes thee hence,

But it shall cost thee dear ! by Heav'ns ! it shall,

.Ele. I am a woman ! have a woman's mind !

Tenderly can love,can hate, and revenge,

And will do so,cost what it may—

Now let me see,what it were best to do !

Becket ! in this methinks,might serve me well !

I can my sons command,Lord Leicester too !

And have a voice,which can in France do much !

I will about it;and raise such a storm,

Will need a greater still,than he,to quell.

(Enter John de Salis mary.)

Speak ! art thou not Salis my,Becket's friend ?

Salis ~~Salis.~~Yes,An' please your highness.

Ele. Then tell me,where is he ?

Salis. With Theobald who lays now at Westminster.

Ele. 'Tis well,I will unto him there

(Exit Queen)

Salis. How strange she seemed in thought !what can it mean ?-

And said that she wou'd unto Becket straight !

'Tis jealousy that stirs within her breast,

Alas ! poor Queen ! indeed,I pity thee !

And thou too Becket,my good lord and master,

For thee I fear,for thee in silence weep:

Thou'rt but a man,art frail,hast many faults;

Can'd I but lull the busy thought within,

Or stop these words that play upon my tongue,

Still crying out ———

Thy fortunes Becket,will prove thy ruin.

Cou'd I do this,I then were happy; but no !

Awake,or in my dreams 'tis still the same;

Salis. There's something more in this than phantasy;

Yes ! 'tis cursed pride, that will undo thee !

I know thee but too well; thou hast a mind

Wou'd lord a world, and think that world too small;

Will Harry bear all this ? Impossible !

The whole sum'd up, brings it to this at last:

Becket must fall ! but he will greatly fall -

I'll labour to stop this, tho' much I dread

My labours will both vain and fruitless prove.
(Exit)

A CHAMBER

On a Table many Papers.

Beck. Chancellor ! Archbishop !- but one step more,- Becket

Rome's holy crown ! and then I am content.

That is my aim - That's the throne I'd fill !

More I cannot ! less I wou'd not stoop to,

Now for the means - Will gold do this ? why aye ;

And what will gold not do? Do'st want a friend ?

Gold will buy thee one! Do'st lack esteem ?

Lend but thine ore to all, and thou will gain it.

Wou'd'st cut thy neighbour's throat ?gold will do that;

Wou'd'st drink, wou'd'st game, wou'd'st wench, 'twill do all ~~the~~ these,

Nay and much more too -then it shall serve me,

As it hath done others, and make me soon,

That which on earth I seek,- No less than Pope.

These letters to my secret friends in Rome

Beck. Shall be dispatch'd and with them as much coin,
Besides good items of what more will follow,
As shall make them most excellent miners.
But hold ! here comes the Queen.

(Enter Eleanor.)

Ele. How fares our good Archbishop ?

Beck. A little sad,or so ! an't please your Grace.
For that I have for ever lost my friend !

Ele. Griev'st thou for thy friend ! what then shou'd I do ?
Losing at once a King,a friend,a husband ?
Tell me,thou holy man,is it a sin
To rave to curse and seek revenge for this !

Beck. Lady,this thou shou'd'st bear and be content.

Ele. Wou'd'st thou to quench thy thirst,drink of the sea ?
Or wou'd'st fuel add to quench the fire ?
'Twere better thou did'st so !than comfort me
With words so tame ! I will not heed thy council !

Beck. Beseech you ,hear me madam !

Ele. Instruct me to raise hell,I'll listen then !
Or tell me tales of those that have been wronged,
And for a term of years have borne it here !
(Pointing to her heart)
Feeding the mind with thoughts of sweet revenge !
Do this and I will swallow up thy words,
As greedily as wolf his panting prey.

Beck. I know whoe wrong'd,and know how hard it is
To bear such wrongs,and bid the mind be still !

Beck. Yet be not over rash my gentle Queen !
For though revenge be sweet,still there is yet,
A sting more poignant far ,-Silent contempt !

Ele. But that I cannot put on ! for my heart
Wou'd burst were I to suffer such neglect,
And not proclaim it to men's ears,with voice
Of thunder's self,that all at once cries out,
Revenge and justice !
Whatsoe'er thouwou'd'st.,I'll do it for thee;
So thou'st but walk with me in this affair,
But now thou art in dignity so high,
With me it rests not to aid thee further !

Beck. Hold, Madam, you can still do much !

Ele. /Tis then with thee to ask,and I shall grant !
Speak ! say what is't !

Beck. Say ! wou'd your highness condescend to write --

Ele. I will do anything

Beck. Thus then it is,- I wou'd make friends at Rome,
And if your Grace,by letters from your hand,
Wou'd deign speak well of me,it might do much,
In clearing of the way for my succession.

Ele. I understand thee well !- it shall be done,

Beck. Then I am thine,and bound in honour to you !

Ele. Richard and John my sons.are both with me !
The Irish to our aid will be prepared;
France too,I warrant me,shall not be still;

Ele. Upon the weakness of our sex the King relies,
But I shall teach him what a woman is,
When slighted in her love ! Becket,farewell !
We shall meet again ere long.-
(Goes out)

Beck. What have I said ? stay madam ! nay she's gone ! -
AmI not leagu'd to stir rebellion ?
Monstrous ! to what hath my ambition led me ?
Why Theobald,grins thy spirit at me thus ?
Look not so ghastly,O ! thou good old man !
Prate not thy dying lesson in my ears,
Lest swift as thunderbolt it strike me dead !
Whither is Theobald flown ? e'en up to Heaven !
Could he but look down,ere that life's heat hath
Left his body cold,and see his councils
Trodden under foot,contemned ,despised,
That thought it is,doth set my brain quite mad !
(Enter Salisbury)
(Becket starts)
What art thou ? Heav'ns how I do tremble !
'Tis out good John,my worthy Salisbury !

Salis. How fares it,Sir ?

Beck. Why well,very well !

Salis. Nay say not so,my lord,your looks are pale,
At your eyes portal stands a wav'ring tear,
Wou'd fain burst forth !-
But your great soul wills it not -O ! speak Sir !

Beck. Thou art truth,thou art honesty itself !
Get thee away,thou must not rest with me.

.Salis. If as you say,I am true and honest,

Then why bereavw me of both these virtues ?

Beck. Speak thy meaning,I understand thee not !

Salis. As owing you my fortune and my means,

I in return owe truth and honesty !

Were I to leave you,then shou'd I lose both,

Beck. Thou quite unman'st me !- How I do play the fool !
(Becket weeps)
Tell me where's that Breakspeare of whom thou spok'st ?

Salis. He waits your pleasure !

Beck. Call him hither.
(Enter Breakspeare)
From John de Salisbury I have heard of thee !

Much hast thou wrote,and art a learned clerk !

Wou'd'st enter into my service ?

Break. My lord,most willingly ! and shall be proud,

In obeying one so goodly as yourself.

Beck. Wou'd'st thou bear letters from me hence to Rome ?

Break. That were a task I douoly shou'd desire,

First ,as in doing it,I serve your grace;

And secondly,that I wou'd journey thither !

Beck. Go then,prepare thyself,and on the morrow

The packets shall be ready,fare thee well !

Break. My lord,I humbly take my leave.

WOODSTOCK
A Room in the Palace
Mowbray and Clifford meeting

Cliff. Good morrow to thee.

What thinkest Mowbray,mounts not Becket well ?

Mow. Aye marry !

Mow. As from blind fortune he wou'd pluck the crown,
And leave her nothing further to bestow.
Cliff. Indeed; he has all he can aspire to !
Mow. Nay,believe it not.
Cliff. Is't possible,he will desire more ?
Mow. Aye ! and like the greedy dog in the fable,
May lose the substance,catching at the shade.
Thought cannot reach at what he wou'd aspire.
Cliff. Nothing less than o'on the crown itself !
For being Chancellor and Archbishop,
He occupies at once two dignities;
Bear hard upon the very rank of King !
Mow. Wou'd'st thou believe it,he'd fain be Pope of Rome !
Cliff. I scarce can think it,where did'st hear this ?
Mow. That I have learned,and still much more;
When Chancellor,the King did lend him monies,
Of which he yet have rendered no account,
And now to gain him voices for the popedom,
He hath been lavish of the public stock,
And this to Henry shall I soon unfold.
Cliff. Do't then,with speed,I pray thee, for ere long,
The King intends to hold a parliament,
In the which he will propose sundry laws,
Appertaining much unto the clergy.
Becket to these,I know will ne'er agree;
'Tis then the King may tax him with these frauds,

.Cliff. He can,nor answernor resist the charge,
Which will in Harry much displeasure raise,
And in the end may prove his overthrow.

Mow. It is well thought ! thy council I shall follow,
Where is the King ?

Cliff. With Rosamond,my daughter,at the bower !
Hither he will return ere night advance.

Mow. Wil't to my chamber ? let us there confer,
That we the better may secure our purpose.

Cliff. Ave,prithee let's away !

THE BOWER

(Henry and Rosamond sitting.)

Hen. As the fond mother bending o'er her child,
Longing doth sit,and wish to kiss the lips,
Yet dares not wake it from all gentle sleep:-
Or as the drowsy soldier on the watch,
Hearing some distant buz,doth list'ning stand,
Fast riveting his eyes upon the spot,
From whence such noise proceeds,I,even so
Can sit and look on thee,my fairest Rose,
Striving in vain to number all thy charms;
And when my task I think well nigh compleat,
One smile doth add so many beauties more
That I my labour must begin anew.

Rosa. And for thy pains,sweet love ! I kiss thy lips,
Hang round thy neck,tell thee how Venus lov'd,
And yet ne'er lov'd so true as I do thee.

Rosa. Sweet nature ! was to thee most bountiful,
Not framing thee alone a perfect man,
But stealing the quintessence of each virtue,
That she might make thee keeper of them all !
Yes ! to men's eyes thou art a lovely casket,
But cou'd they view the store that is within,
Thine outward form wou'd then appear a blot;
For courage,wisdom,charity are thine !
And whenthoundid first see thy Rosamond,
Love pluck'd his burning heart from out his breast,
Clift it in twain,then gave to each of us,
An equal share ! Was it not so,my Harry ?
Hen. Yes,sweet love ! but Venus too was busy,
And whilst she did bedeck thee with her charms,
Was pleas'd so with the work,that she ne'er thought
How she herself had stripp'd,giving thee all !
An I kiss thee,methinks sweet love himself
Sits on thy front,and waves thy silky hair !
As jealous he wou'd keep me from the theft,
Yet he ne'er thinks how ev'ry gentle touch,
From these his silken whips,make it more sweet;
For gliding o'er my lips,they do distil
Thick golden odours to the taste,as sweet,
As sleepy dove's eye to the love sick heart.
Rosa. Then with mine hair I'll weave thee such an heart
Which thou shall carry in thy bosom sweet,
As a true token of thy Rosamond's

(Distant sound of an horn)

Hen. But soft ! the distant horn doth chide

For this mynhee long absence ! I must away,

And thereby stop suspicion:farewell my love !

(kisses her)

Rosa. Nay,Harry, I must with thee,through the Bower,

And when we part,those eyes shall follow love,

And mock themselves with airy sight of thee.

Returning I will stop and say,'twas here

I hung upon his rose ! 'twas here I kiss'd him

Then anxious wait my love's,my lord's return.

WOODSTOCK PALACE.

(Enter Henry and Mowbray)

Hen. Now we're alone,what wou'd'st thou with us ?

Mow. 'Tis touching Becket,Sir,that I wou'd speak !

Hen. Well ! Mowbray,what of him ?.

Mow. I wou'd 'twere less,than that I shall make known;

Most vilely he doth wrong your Grace.

Hen. Have a care ! I do believe thee honest,

And think thou'st a tongue ne'er stoop'd to falsehood !

I wou'd forgive that man,who spoke me truth,

Though he stood charged with foulest murder;

But I wou'd spurn that soul wou'd tell a lie,

The' dearer to me e'en than life itself;

For 'tis of sins the meanest,the most vile !

Beware of malice; thus far I warn thee !

And now proceed.

Mow. Weigh well my words,I do beseech your Grace !
For shou'd I speak more than truth,tho' it be
In the uttering of one syliable,
Spurn me to foot ! call me base liar !
This will I bear from you,my royal sir !

Hen. To thy purpose then.

Mow. When Chancellor,you lent Becket monies !

Hen. I did.

Mow. And think those monies well applied ?

Hen. I do believe so !

Mow. Fore God ! then I do pledge myself they are not.
And as I speak the truth,so may I answer !

Hen. Ha'st ought else to add unto the charge ?

Mow. I have much more,and much worse too my lord.
He hath drawn largely,from your treasury !

Hen. And to what end do this ?-

Mow Tho' great my liege he wou'd be greater !

Hen. What; aims he at our power then ?

Mow. Not so; but fain wou'd be Rome's holy king !

Hen. How ! say you, Pope of Rome !

Mow. I have said it,Sir !

Hen. And thou shal't answer it.

Mow. Most willingly my liege.
(Enter Lord de Clifford)

Hen. My good Lord Clifford,knows he ought of this ?

Mow. He doth my liege !

Hen. Well ! be silent both I charge ye,

Both. We swear it Sir !

.Hen. Mowbray ! thou must hence to London !

We would at Clarendon meet all our lords,

And look I charge ye,Becket fail us not !
(Takes a paper from his pocket)

This order bearingmour royal signet,

Shall command their attendance !make good speed,

And remember that,thou hast to answer.

Mow. Fear me not,Sir, good health unto your grace !
(Goes out)

Hen. The like to thee,farewel !My Lord Clifford,

See all be ready for our journey hence,

And look you wake us,by five i'the morning.

Cliff. I shall my liege,

Hen. See that our favourite mettled steed,

Be saddled early, Farewel !

Cliff. Sweet rest unto your grace !

LONDON

A CHAMBER.
(Enter Eleanor and Richard.

Ele. How wears the time,hath it yet gone twelve ?

Rich. Sweet mother,no ! ut it bears hard upon.

I warrent me,they will not fail their time !

O,here comes John,my brother !

Ele. Bring'st thou any tidings ?

John. Lord Leicester, and Lord Hugh will soon be here !

Ele. Aye ! and Becket our Archbishop too.

Rich. What ! is he then with us,who is't did ~~that~~ this ?

Ele. 'Twas I ! and were it not mooly done ?

Rich. Aye ! truly, but how did'st compass it ?

Ele. Ask me not here, I'll tell thee more at leisure.
(Enter Leicester and Chester)
Well good Leicester, how many are we strong ?

Lei. For mine own part, I muster full two thousand,

And Lord Hugh Chester here, as many more.

John. My brother Richard, and myself command,

At least five thousand able fighting men,

Ireland shall send us full three thousand more !
(Enter a Servant)

Serv. A messenger without wou'd speak unto your grace.

Ele. Then show him to our presence !
(Exit Servant)
(Enter Messenger)
Whence come you Sir ?

Mess. From William King of Scotland,-

Who with these letters greets your highness.

Ele. Go, get refreshment, and rest awhile !
(Messenger goes out)
(opens the packet) Well, Lords ! here is news indeed !

By this I learn, Scotland is with us too.

'Twas I who stirr'd William our brother to this !

Ches. I wou'd you had done the like by Mowbray;

For he's in battle, a most valiant knight.

Leic. That were impossible ! since with Henry,

He still remains the firm and steady friend.

Ele. So let him ! we count thrice Harry's number,

Besides our troops are all prepared for war,

Whilst yet the King knows nothing of our aim.

How I do burn to show him that I've done

To make his stubborn, never bending knee

Ele. Kiss the bare ground,and for my pardon sue;

That were revenge indeed,revenge most sweet !

(Enter Becket)

Why are thou thus tardy,my Lord Archbishop ?

Beck. Most gracious Queen ! I humbly do beseech,

That as I've well revolv'd this business,

You'll no further urge me,to act therein.

Ele. Why how now Becket ?

Beck. Good Queen ! my conscience wills it so.

Ele. Hold ! I wou'd a word in private with you.

(Takes him aside)

When I to Rome did LETTERS write,I then

Did on thy piety and goodly deeds enlarge,

And gave thee virtues scarce to man belong'd.

Most patiently thy conscience bore all this:

Now in sooth thou hast receiv'd thine earnest,

And like a cunning clerk wou'd'st prate of conscience,

But I will all confess unto the King !

That he may know thee for an hypocrite,

This will I do,if thou remain not firm.

Beck. Think but a while how much the King hath serv'd me !

How many favours he hath heap'd upon me

Beseech you ,lady,let me hence away !

Ele. Thou knowest my sentence ! do as thou wilt.

Beck. Madam,I am yours ! and must now censor

Ele. Why so 'tis best.

(Enter a Servant)

Serv. Roger Mowbray wou'd speak unto your Grace.

Beck. Bring him unto us.

(Enter Mowbray)

Rich. Aye ! truly, but how did'st compass it ?

Ele. Ask me no not here, I'll tell thee more at leisure.
(Enter Leicester and Chester)
Well ! good Leicester, how many are we streng ?

Leic. For mine own part, I muster full two thousand

And Lord Hugh Chester here, as many more.

John

Mow. At Clarendon, the King wou'd see you Lords;

As he doth purpose there a Parliament:

He begs your Grace moreover will not fail.

Beck. We shall meet him there -

Mow. Here is the order bearing his signet,
(Takes out the paper which the King gave him))
Which he bade me safe deliver to your hands.

Mine errand thus fulfilled I take my leave.

Leic. Yet hold ! good Mowbray.

Thou art most true and faithful to the King.

Mow. And hope, my lord, I ne'er shall prove other.

Leic. He doth but ill requite thy pains.

Mow. I think not so, for I have one reward

O'ertops all that majesty can bestow;

'Tis greater far than title, riches, powr ;

The mind's content - in honouring my King,

And loving my country, I gain all this,

What wou'd you more ? Malice or treason

Alike I defy ---

My unstained soul shall wait death's direful blow

And set but once to rise again for ever

Leic. Mowbray, farewel !

Mow. Health to you all. (Goes out)

Ele. We'll change his note, I warrant. !

Beck. I must follow him, for I have letters,

Which I wou'd that Mowbray bear unto the King !

Ele. Thou art with us ?

Beck. Most truly so. (Goes out)

Rich. Now then, prepare we for the Parliament !

John. And then for war --

Rich. Leicester, assemble all your troops,

And with Earl Hugh, march on th Clarendon,

Ere night, myself and John shall overtake you.

Leic. & Ches. Fare ye well !

Rich. See brother, the like be done by our men;

And tell Earl Robert, we'll apoint the halt

At our next meeting; speed thee to do this !

John. I shall attend to it straight (Goes out)

Rich. Sweet mother, thou wilt after us.

Ele. The less of life alone shall plead excuse.

Rich. 'Till next we meet farewel !

Ele. Farewel my gentle Richard.

SCENE

A HALL AT CLARENDON

King, Lords, Archbishop of York, and Becket, with Bishops assembled.
Parchments &c. laying on the table.

Hen. Though we our clergy much esteem, my lords,

Our People are still most dear unto us:

We cannot therefore pass such crying deeds,

As late in violation of our laws

We find our beadsmen have been charged withal;

Drunkeness, Gluttony, bloody murders,

Have partially been judged and pardon'd.

I therefore have thought meet to form an act,

Purporting to try the sins of churchmen,

Hen. Not by theirs,but by the laws of the land.

As next to us in power,we call on you,

Our lord of Canterbury,to sign this !
(Becket goes over to the table and seemingly reads out the parchment)

Beck. My liege I dare not,for 't'wou'd curb the rights,

And weaken much the laws of holy church.

Hen. If holy be thy laws,why suffer they

Such bold,such impudent,such daring crimes

To pass unpunished,in the sight of God.

The greatest of my peers for murder dies;

But you so wink at practices most vile,

That they do fit you easy as your robes;

Tell me ! who gave you these privileges !

Beck. God's minister elect, the Pope of Rome !

Hen. I shame to hear thee speak thus ! why dost think

The hand of God wou'd sanction deeds like these?

Beck. From him the Pope receives his holy trust,

Whate'er he doth ordain,comes from above;

Therefore I will not to this act subscribe,

Hen. Proud upstart man ! but I will hold awhile.

My Lord of York,and you my bishops here,

Will please ye,set your signets to this deed ?

York. For mine own part part,most willingly !
(Archbishop of York and all the Bishops sign the deed)
(Becket rises,and calls for the Seal of Chancellor, then going up to the table,throws it down.)

Beck. There,Sir ! take back your seal of Chancellor,

Bestow it elsewhere ! I will no more on't.

Hen. But with it render me the sums I lent thee.

Beck. You never lent me ought.

Hen. Did'st not borrow of me four hundred marks ?

Beck. Sir,you did give them to me !

Hen. By holy thorn ! but thou shalt pay me straight,

Or else away to prison for it.

Beck. I am thy confessor,thy ghostly father !

Shou'd son e'er seek to crush his father ?

Again I tell the king ! I'd rather die,

Then lessen in one point,my churches rights.

Hen. Proud,insolent clerk?! as such thou does speak;

But I will check thy pride,ere I do leave thee.

Thou hast dealt freely with our treasury -

Beck. 'Tis false ! by holy church, 'tis false.

Hen. Mowbray,where art thou ? stand now to thy charge.
(Mowbray rises from his seat)

Mow. Here,my liege,and to his teeth I tell him,

He hath made free with thirty thousand marks !

And let him now deny it if he dare --
(Becket rises in a passion)

Beck. Take thou the lie ! and wer't not for my priesthood,

Inwou'd against the charge defend myself,

With sword in hand,and make thy life answer it.

Mow. To thy soul again proud priest I give the lie,

And say thou hast done that,and e'en much more !

Bring these accounts,nay ! prithee,start not thus.

Beck. Vile insect ! pease,I spurn thee,

Mow. Wou'd thou were other than thou art,proud priest.

(Mowbray going towards Becket enraged)

(King rises)

Hen. Sit ! Mowbray,I charge thee sit.

Mow. O ! such usage my liege !-

Hen. Peace ! I say.

Mow. I crave your highness pardon,for these words
Were harsh enough to stir a coward's blood;
Yet I will obey,my lord.- (sits down)

Hen. Wilt thou thy signet set hereto ?

Beck. I dare not ! -

Hen. Pay quickly then,that which thou ow'st me,

Beck. Were it a just debt,Sire,I lack the means.

Hen. Die thee to prison then ! and may thy pride
Still bear thee up,and keep thee company.-
Art thou so stubborn,and so hard of heart,
That we two,cannot dwell in this our land.
Tell me proud Clerk ? must I lord it o'er thee,
Or is it great Becket's will,that I shou'd kneel,
And learn obedience ? Insolent vain man !

Beck. I wou'd not Sir,you stoop'd unto my will !
But wou'd that you were governed by my council
As confessor,I know thy hidden sins.

Hen. I'll bear no longer - Without there,my guard !-

Leic. Hold ! I will pay that he owes to you,Sire !

Hen. Then do so,and I shall mark thee for it !
Beneath this show of liberality,
Sure something lurks !-is man thus kind to man

Mow. And without pause ?the world runs not so smooth.

Break up the council ! Mowbray follow me:

But look to thyself,my good Lord Leicester

(They all follow the King,except Lord Leicester and Becket)

Leic. My Lord Archbishop,whither go you now ?

Beck. I shall with speed towards Canterbury.

Leic. And I to join the Queen and Princes.

Beck. Then bear to her this message,I pray thee !

Wer't not that now the King did threaten me,

Call'd me liar,and 'fore mine enemies,

Stain'd my honour,and used vile words withal,

I ne'er my vow of secrecy had broke,

But to be treated thus ,I will not bear:

As holy confessor unto the King !

I can the cause of this neglect make known,

The Lord de Clifford's daughter, rosamond;

'Tis she that fills the seat in Harry's heart;

And robs fair Ellen of her husband's love.

Leic. This is indeed,most base,but where dwells she ?

Beck. Nigh Woodstock palace stands a secret bower,

The which,with so much art and skill is formed,

That it defies the cunning of man's search !

For tho' you'd seem to pass it o'er and o'er,

You still return unto the self same spot.

By which you entered;known is the secret

Only to Mowbray and her father,Lord de Clifford.

Leic. I shall with speed,relate this to the Queen;

Lois. And much she will applaud thee for this news.
Farewel ! my lord.

Beck. My love go with thee too, farewel !
Cou'd I mine eyes turn inwardto my soul,
They'd find it care worn,sick, nay,very sick !
My glory fades,my triumph's at an end.
I wish'd for more,yet greater shall not be :
A summons here bids me prepare for death !
O ! 'tis a dreadful call,when our account
In Heav'ns great register,stands blotted.
A punishment,but for a time to bear
Were nothing,but to be for ever curst
To all eternity,'tis horrible !
No end,nodistant time,that one may say,
Thus much and 'tis o'er,then am I happy !
But no ! we must to never ending fires;
Or chance,be plac'd beneath the thrones of those
That blessed are,and say within thyself,
Thus might I have been 'tis a madning thought !
'Tis on this earth to me a very hell !-
I'll in,to Heav'n breathe a fervent prayer !
Seek peace and comfort,for 'tis only there !

A CHAMBER

Enter Sir Reginald Berisen,Sir Hugh Morvele,Sir Wm. Tracy,and Sir Richard Bryte.
Sir Hugh to Sir Reginald

Sir Hugh. Did'st not mark the King ?

Sir Reg. He seemed in wrath —

Sir Rich. Rather say he was so,and with just cause,

Sir Wm. Wou'd I had been Harry ! when so proudly
He did give up the seal?of Chancellor -
His life shou'd scarce have satisfied my rage.

Sir Reg. Heard'st thou that,the King did say out now ?

Sir Hugh. I'll tell it - On entering his chamber,
He sat him down,and frowning leant on's hand;
The scarlet dye that flush'd upon his cheek,
Became all ~~plid,~~ palid,then turned to red again,
Twice Mowbray did address him,but in vain;
No longer able to restrain his wrath,
In rage he thus burst forth - By holy thorn !
Is it not pity that no one present,
(For many here do call themselves my friends !)
Will here stand forth,and rid me of this man,
This haughty clerk,this insolent proud priest -
More he said not,but leaning on his hand,
Again turned silent,and seem'd lost in thought !

Sir Rich. Shall we then prove his friends,and do this deed ?
Where is Becket now ?

Sir Reg. Gone hence to Canterbury —

Sir Rich. There let him stay - are we all agreed ?

Sir Hugh. Aye,if he sign not to the King's act !

Sir Rich. Then let's away ! arm ourselves and follow him.

All. Agreed !

A CHAMBER

Enter Eleanor and Leicester

Ele. At Woodstock Bower,say'st thou ?

Leic. Madam, I did.

Ele. For this,I thank thee Becket.

Patience avaunt ! I will no more of thee.

Was I before a tigress in revenge ?

I now am worse than tongue to ear can tell;

For I can act such things - but no matter,

Were this same Rosamond cas'd round with flint,

My nails,the rugged substance shou'd tear off,

Rend forth the heart from out her strumpet breast,

Then smiling tell the King,'twas I that did it !

Leic. Madam,beware how you proceed in this,

Cunning and art will better serve your purpose.

Ele. Where is the Lord de Clifford now ?

Leic. At Woodstock,as I guess.

Ele. How say you ?

Did he not attend the Parliament ?

Leic. He did;but ere the council was broke up,

At Clarendon he took?horse,and left us.

Ele. Went Mowbray thither too ?

Leic. No,he rested with the King.

Ele. Alone ! why then 'tis just as I wou'd have it;

I must away; do you unto my sons,

Tell them ere time have worn three days compleat,

I shall again be with them.-Fare thee well !

SCENE —CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

(Becket comes forward slowly seeming thoughtful)

Beck. Man hath his day of joy and misery !

How short the one,how lasting is the other !

With me the first is long blown o'er,and now

The second comes,to mock my tortur'd soul,

With idect laughter,ringing to mine ears

My loss of power,my faded glory —

The overpeering front ! that ere a sun

Outshone the girdled brow of majesty.

Now clouded,dim,and ~~pl~~ pale. O ! I am sick.

Tush ! tush ! the sleep of death will cure all thoughts;

And yet,must this my wholesome goodly flesh

Rot and serve to feed the crawling earth worms,

Who nothing savours but of dust and clay,—

I tremble at the thought,and e'en but now —

They wind about my flesh,and to the feel

Are damp, and cold, as that same horrid sweat,

Which frets from out the front of dying man !

Yet it must be so,death will have his due,

The worm will feast his fill,and man must rot —

Thus much for the body corruptible !

As for the soul !- Iwou'd,but cannot speak,

And were I,all wou'd be conjectural.—

My account wou'd stand as clear at the last,

As now,that I have nothing uttered.

Enter John de Salisbury

Salis. Letters from the Queen ,my lord !

Beck. Take them hence !-

I'll stir no more in this rebellion.

Salis. How say you,Sir ! Rebellion !

Beck. I have spoke too much,yet what matters it ?

Yes ! Salisbury,I am that godly man,

Who have repaid the bounty of ~~tha~~ his Prince

With damned treason - O ! curs'd ambition,

To thee ! I long ago have sold my peace,

And now my life must answer for the fault.

Now what think you,Sir,? I am a traitor !

And worse ! for I have broke my oath to God,

Told to men's ears,those secrets which the King

Did breathe to me his ghostly confessor —

) ! I am a poor wretched,lost,lost man.

Salis. And yet you are my gracious master still—

Beck. Leave me ! I prithie leave me.

Salis. O turn not thus from thy true Salisbury !

I will not quit,but hang upon this rope,

Till you look down upon your once lov'd friend !

This out-stretched hand,which fain wou'd bid me hence,

Thus let me kiss ! and its unkindness shame.

Beck. Can'st thou then look upon me with pity ?

Is thy good heart so soft that it doth melt

Like snow-drop,thus to behold my greatness ?

Which once did shine as bright as mid-day sun,

But now ! is set for ever,O ! can'st thou

Weep so fast,and for a poor fall'n man !

Salis. I have a memory of what is past;

Can view my present state, and that it was,

Can say here is the man, hath done all this !

Hath cloath'd and fed me, been to me a father !

This self same man doth fall, and shall not I

Remember such things were, and stoop to save him ?

O ! yes, and give up fortune, life, nay all.
(Kneels to Becket, who embraces him)

Beck. I did not think such virtue dwelt on earth !

No more ! I'll weep upon my present woes !

For they have taught me what a man may be,

Who keeps his conscience clear, and free from sin.

They have instructed me, that here below,

The friend you have in high prosperity,

May in adversity, prove still the same,

Yes ! for my Salisbury is yet most true,

Had I been alway great, I ne'er had known this.

Now let us to prayer !—
(Enter Priests, bearing the chalice and crozier, with others following, clad in white, they go up to the altar. Becket and Salisbury follow)
(Enter a Monk in seeming haste)

Monk. Fly ! fly ! save yourself my Lord Archbishop—
(Becket turning from the steps of the altar)

Beck. What means this ?

Monk. Four Knights, all arm'd are seeking for your Grace,

They railed against you, and did mutter threats;

On questioning their errand, they answered,

We come from Henry ! to seek a traitor,—

Beseech you away my lord and save yourself

Beck. 'Tis done ! my time is come,and I ~~shall~~ must die,

I feel,I know it, and am prepared.

Salis.You shall,you must away ,my lord.
(Tries to force him out)

Beck. Off with your hands ! I love thee Salisbury -

And wou'd not quit thee,with an angry thought.

For thy zeal,my thanks ! but all is vain,

My lamp is out !- Weep not,we soon shall meet,

Our souls will join again,in heav'n for ever.
(Enter the four Knights)

Sir Reg.Where is Becket ? Where is the traitor ?

Beck. Hold ! I answer to the name of Becket,

But not to that of traitor:your wills Sirs,

And how dare ye thus my church profane !

Your bodies cas'd in rude and warlike steel,

Your caps locked on your brows,your beavers down,

Which shou'd be off,in such a holy place,

A house of peace,and not a field of battle !

Sir Hugh.We stand not upon ceremony.

Beck. 'Twere better Sir you did ! who are ye ?

Sir Hugh.We from insulted majesty are come,

To know if thou unto his act will sign ?

Beck. Then briefly I reply,I will not ——

'Twou'd weaken much the power of holy church,

So get you hence ! and bear this answer back;

Or father (for well I know your errand)

Compleat your work,(he smiles in contempt) 'rwill do you honour Sirs,

Sir Hugh.Dar'st thou to mock us with rude contempt ?

Sir Hugh. 'Twere better thou did'st sooth us with fair words .

Beck. Peace ! I say - What ! I sooth, I flatter ye,

Know ye my station, Sirs, and who I am ?

Thomas, holy Lord of Canterbury !

The King and I, or Becket and Henry,

Are but the self-same thing.

Sir Reg. Hear ye this ?

Salis. For heavens grace, Sir, do not thus urge them.

Beck. Your ear, Sirs ! meant not to lisp my words,

An 'twill please ye ! I shall again rehearse:—

Yet wherefore waste my speeech upon such things ?

Were ye true men, you'd shew your faces bare,

But now ye come to act a damned deed,

And shrink to let men peep upon your looks;

But know ! there is an eye can pierce thar steel,

A mighty hand ! will cfush the guilty soul,

A righteous God ! to judge the murderer.

Sir Hugh. And to condemn thee, traitor which thou art !

Beck. Where I elsewhere than in this sainted place,

Tho' clad but as I am, in these thin robes,

I wou'd against ye all oppose myself,

Wou'd singly crush those arms ye but disgrace,

And to perdition downward hurl your souls.—

Sir Reg. I'll bear no more ! that for thy words—
(Strikes at him with his sword, Salisbury boldly holds o
out his arm, and receives the blow, the Priests all affrighted,
retire except Salisbury. Becket tries to wrench a sword out
of one of their hands.)

Beck. Why now ! ye show yourselves, but I'll grapple.
(Another Knight behind strikes him on the head)
Sir Hugh. Thy labour is but vain, have at thee !-
(Becket falls with one knee on the step of the altar, Salisbury holds him up, kneeling by him)

Beck. O God ! and thou Saint Denis ! at whose shrine

I now receive the all-dread blow of death,-

To thee, I offer up my passing soul.
(They strike him again)
Again a blow ! (Strikes again)

And now another!- O Salisbury !

Take me to thine arms, I die a martyr !-

O Lord ! all merciful ! forgive my sins !

'Tis done ! my God forgives, he pardons me.

And thus, thus, my soul flies up to heaven ! (Dies)

Salis. Amen ! amen ! my noble master.

Sir Hugh. Now we have done the deed, let's unto his house,

Seal up his goods, then onward to the King !

Come then ! about it straight. (Exeunt)

The Monks enter in procession, and sing a Requiem to solemn music.

SCENE CHANGES TO A CHAMBER IN THE PALACE, LONDON.

Henry and Mowbray.

Hen. How say you Mowbray ?

Mow. Your people of the north, are all in arms,

And headed are by Ellen and your sons.

Hen. How many are they strong ?

Mow. Full nine thousand ! and secretly I learn

William the Scottish King is with them joined,

Who to their number adds six thousand more :-

Mow. They fear not, but loudly do defy you !

Hen. My wife ! my sons ! all leagu'd at once against me ;

Was ever curse, upon a parent's head,

Pour'd down with so much vengeance as on mine ?

Why toils the father for his infant child ?

Since he but warms a snake to sting his peace;

At once, 'twere better population ceased,

Then stock the world with beings such as these.

I cou'd now overturn this wide expanse,

Change the general face of all creation,

Making the world a second chaos !

Wishing I were unborn !-what must be done ?

Mow. 'Twere better we make head against them.

Hen. What numbers have we ?

Mow. Near seven thousand !

Hen. The odds are great against us then.

Mow. Even so, Sir.

Hen. Where is that proud, that haughty Becket ?

Mow. He left the Parliament for Canterbury.

(Enter a Servant)

Serv. One in seeming haste wou'd speak unto your Grace !

Hen. Shew him before us !

(Enter one of Becket's Gentlemen)

Whence come you Sir ?

Gent. From Canterbury.

Hen. From Becket I suppose,

Well, Sir ! What news from him ?

Gent. Alas ! I come, and most unwillingly,

To say my lord and master's murdered.

Hen. How ! murder'd - Who hath done this vile deed ?

Gent. Four Knights, my lord, belonging to the court.
They did moreover say, 'twas by your will.

Hen. How ! but they shall justly answer for't.

Mow. Right well I know those that have done this act;
At Clarendon, you left the Parliament,
And in much choler, some words did 'scape you,
That scarce were utter'd, but you did repent;
Yet from those items, hath this deed been done.

Hen. O ! this, this is the very curse of kings !
If we but nod, that nod must be obey'd;
And though we only have the thought of sin,
Yet are there many that surround the throne,
Who to gain love and favour of their Prince,
Will nourish and ripen such sinful thoughts,
Will in the soul, they take a lasting root,
And in the end seal us for destruction.

Mow. 'Twere fit, my Prince, you think on your safety.

Hen. Where lies the enemy ?

Mow. They come to meet us in Northumberland.

Hen. On then ! and march we our men thither too !
They aid, with mighty numbers a bad cause,
Ours is stronger, 'tis uphold by justice.
(Exeunt)

SCENE.

DISTANT VIEW OF ALNWICK, IN NORTHUMBERLAND.

Enter Prince Richard, John and Henry, William King of Scots, Hugh Earl of Chester, Robt. Earl of Leicester and Army

(Drums beating)

Rich. Halt ! Thus far have we march'd crown'd with success,
No siege,no battle yet,hath worn our troops.
No garrison hath dar'd to stop our course,
But all obediently have ope'd their gates,
And friendly open unto us. Tell me now !
How call you this place ?

Leic. They name it Alnwick.

Rich. Encamp we here,this ground doth like us well;
Have yet our scouts brought tidings of the King ?

Ches. Yes,good Prince,he marches slowly hither.

Rich. What power brings he ?

Ches. Scarce seven thousand men.

Rich. So few !why sure he sleeps,but we'll rouse him.
Tell me noble William ! do'st not think so ?

Wm. From our Scot's horn we'll an alarum sound,
Shall stir his sluggard soul,I warrant me.
Thrice have thy father batter'd down my arms,!
Degraded and Dishonour'd me, but now !
The time is come,that I shall mock in turn.

(Drums)beat)

Enter Queen Eleanor

Ele. My sons,my noblemen ! how fare ye all !
This is a joyful and a seemly sight.

Rich. Here is the hardy William,King of Scots,
Who,with his power did join us yesternight.

Ele. Welcome our brother,welcome unto us.

Rich. Heard'st thou, by the way, of noble Becket ?

Ele. Too much I fear, unwelcome is the news !

Oh ! my gentle Richard, alas he's slain.

Rich. Where, and by whom ?

Ele. Four Knights, dispatch'd by Harry, as I hear,

Murder'd him, i'th' Church at Canterbury.

Rich. Deed most foul ! yet shall it to us prove fair.

Just Heav'n will crown our arms with victory,

Making us instruments of their vengeance.

But where's thy rival ? where is Rosamond ?

Ele. No matter !-

She ne'er again will cross me in my love.

Rich. Have you imprison'd her, is she then safe ?

Ele. Aye ! if death can make her so.

Rich. O mother, mother ! this is too much --

Ele. I came not hither to seek thy council.

Rich. 'Twere better madam, had you so done,

Ele. No more, Sir ! she's poison'd, and I'm content.

Go ! prate thy counsel to the howling winds,

They, not I, may chance listen to thy moan;

Or rather, go weep with Lord de Clifford---

Thou'lt find him in the camp, chain'd and my prisoner.

(A trumpet sounds)

Enter Mowbray with a Herald.

Your errand, Sir ?

Mow. I come with gracious offers from the King;

If it so please you, grant a hearing.

Ele. Proceed, Sir !

Mow. He will'd,that thrice his heralds shou'd sound forth,
Ere I make known to you my embassy
(Herald sounds three times)
Henry the Second,just King of England,
Doth here arraign Richard,John and Henry,
The lawful send and heirs of his body,
With Eleanor,their mother,also
Earl Rober[illegible] and Hugh Earl of Chester,
With ot[illegible] wr[illegible]here not named,guilty of high treason !
But shou'd they now confess their rebellion,
Dismiss their followers,and sue for mercy,
To all,save only William of Scotland,
Most graciously his pardon here doth grant,
If stubborn,ye chance refuse this offer,
No tie of blood will soften his vengeance;
The yearnings of a parent will be hushed.--
Nor shew the mercy of a conqueror.
Ele. Go ! bear this answer back unto the King;
We spurn his offer,and defy his rage,--
From us,a speech like this,had sounded well,
We from thy master,did expect fair words,
Not threats like these,- Begone !you know our will.
Mow. Wou'd ye,that I bear this answer back ?
Ele. Aye ! and tale good heed you soften not the phrase.
Leic. (scoffingly) Good Mowbray,gentle Mowbray,fare thee well !
Mow. My lord ! a word with you.
(Leicester goes to him)

Mow. When I do jeer,Sir, 'tis not with my tongue;

This is the instrument which I do use.
(Putting his hand on his sword)
And this the arm,that wears it,do'st hear me ?
(Holds up his right hand)
I shall in fight, 'gainst thee oppose myself,

'Tis there I'll answer this your mockery,

And deal so roughly with your lordship's crest,

That were my lady's monkey in the field,

He'd maul and make a plaything of your bear,

And wrench from out his paw,the ragged staff,

Such a crest suits well an apish bearer;

Flout not good my lord ! I ne'er do flatter.

Leic.Sir,Sir,it shou'd seem —
(Attempt to draw his sword)
Mow. Hold ! my Lord,I am a lunt Englishman,

And in that title,boast an unstain'd soul,

A hand that ne'er have grip'd a rebel sword,

But always borne the steel 'gainst such as thee,

Enemies of our true anointed King.

Though I wou'd fain chastise that perjur'd heart,

And teach thee what it is to wear a soul,

That only lives to guard its country's rights;

Yet by your leave ! a lady claims respect.
(Bows to the Queen)
Farewel ! to-morrow i'th field we'll meet;

Then remember,or one,or both must fall.(Goes out)

Leic.I do accept the challenge.

Ele. Come,sirs ! I pray you now let's in and rest.

By times to-morrow, we'll attack the King;

Therefore good night,and peace be with you all.
All. Sweet Queen,farewel !

KING HENRY'S CAMP.

Enter Henry and Mowbray.

Hen. They would not listen to my terms !

Mow. They did refuse,and spurned your offer.

Hen. Saw'st thou the Scottish King ?

Mow. Aye ! my lord.

Hen. Well ! see my arms be laid within my tent.

And then get thee to rest.
(Mowbray kneels)

Mow. Yet ere I go,thus on my bended knee

I would intreat a favour of your Grace.

Hen. Then ask ! I am not wont to deny thee.

Mow. So please it then,that you permit me Sire,

To range my troops 'gainst those of Lord Leicester,

Hen. Thy boon is granted ! so good night
(Mowbray rises)

Mow. Thank your Grace ! now fly thou creeping night,

And let bright day light be triumphant.

May gentlest sleep attend your highness' couch.
(Goes out)

Hen. Thy fare thee well,and to thy wish,amen !

Yet amen ! will not close these care-worn eyes.

Nor lull this troubled soul,for one short hour,

Within thy arms, Oh ! sleep,thounurse of care !

What avails my sceptre,ball, nay crown itself ?

And will not purchase soft and sweet repose !

The wretch who toils throughout the sun's bright course,

Tho' he be stretch'd upon the flinty rock,

And lies not further from its lofty brink,

Than half his body's length,o'er sink a man,

Hen. Thou'lt hug,altho' the roaring sea itself
Conjoin,to make the spot more horrible !
The peasant labours for his daily food,
And hourly sweats from bodily fatigue !
But O ! how different stands the case with me !
I for a nation toil,and if I sin,
Millions of souls rain curses on my head.
I see it now ! the man whom fortune woos,
Will ne'er in word or thought wherefore is it ?
That now the curse of Heav'n rears against me,
Louder and hotter,than 'tis wont to do !
I ne'er killed my father,deny'd my God !
Yet doth my own flesh seek to destroy me,
Is it, O Lord ! that I am worse in sin ?
Or that the deeds of my forefathers gone,
Are reckoned up,and I am singled out
To answer all ? yet be it as it may,
Do not suffer O merciful Father !
That I, to-morrow,in the broil of war
Shou'd strike my flesh,and spill my children's blood.
My life be for-feit,and not theirs O Lord !
I'll in and wear away this disnal night
In pray'r,and offering tears of penitence.

A FIELD.

Soldiers fighting,Drums beating,&c.
Enter Mowbray

Mow. Already is the field one sea of blood !
Which thrice I have o'er tred,yet find him not.

Mow. Shou'd this day's fight e ended ere we meet,

I shall go star,in very grief of heart.

Enter Leicester in haste

Lero.Come forth ! and face me,where art thou Mowbray ?

Mow. Here ! here ! and for this fight,I thank thee,Mars !

Now breast to breast,and steel to steel exres'd,

Thus fight we,till of one the life be clos'd !
(They fight,Mowbray beats off Leicester)

Enter William,King of Scots.
Flourish of Drums &c.

Wa. Whither shall I fly , triumphant Harry !

Like that same lion glazon'd on his shield,

Bears death to us and to our host fears'd hour !

That I shou'd live again to grace his victory !
(Enter King Henry with his helmet on)

Hen. Beshrew me,now ! but I do know thee well !

And long have fought thee ! thou'rt the Scottish King !

Then turn thy sword where it shall honour reap,

If it prove victor ! I am King Henry !

Thou'rt my equal--a king against a king,

O glorious thought ! thus ! thus ! have at the then !
(They fight,King of Scots flies)
Enter Prince Richard with his sword down

Thou fliest ! and happly for thee,here is one,~~Who like thy~~

Who like thy guardian angel,lights on earth,

To stay that death,which else we'd have men thine.
(Harry and Richard fight then pause)
Stand aloof ! thou art in fight,so passing hot !

That I scu'd almost stain thee for my blood.

Rich. Thy pause we air ? come on again !

Hen. Yet hold ! I wou'd thy beaver were unlock'd,
That I might view thy face. A deadly sweat
Pours down my feverish limbs,when thus I raise
My steel against thy breast -- I will no more.

Rich. Then thou art my prisoner.

Hen. Nay,first I will unease,and show myself,
If then thou knowest me not,we'll to it again,
And shou'd I slay thee,thou wilt noply die !
(Turning up his Beaver)
For Henry of England is thy rival !
(Richard drops his sword,kneels,and takes his father round the knees)

Rich. Gracious gods !- my father !

Hen. O ! say,ar't not Richard my eldest born ?
(Richard raises his beaver)

Rich. I was, I was,but am no longer so !
For I have rebell'd against my parent;
I am unnatural,have broke those bonds,
Which in a child,shou'd strengthen with his years,
O never,never more ! —
Can I make peace with God,or thee my sire.

Hen. Rise, my son,from me thou hast forgiveness
(Embraces him)
But remember,thy God must pardon too.
(Shouting without,victory ! victory !King Henry have gained the day)
This shout doth hail me master of the field;
Follow my child.I will unto my tent,
And offer thanks to God;come,cheer thee up.
(Exeunt)

KING HENRY'S TENT
Henry seated on a chair of state,Queen Ellen, Princes John,Henry and Richard. Hugh of Chester, Egbert of Leicester,and William,King of Scotland in chains

Prisoners with guards &c.
Drums and trumpets sound

Hen. Let yon rude clamour cease ! now tell me,Sirs,

And you our once lov'd Queen,that gave them birth !

Why have ye dar'd to stain my peaceful land,
And drench my fertile plains in English blood ?

Have ye forgot your duty to your God,

And can you thus upon a parent dare to look,

Who gave you being !

Oh shame,shame ! thus to league with foul rebellion.
(John - the other Princes kneel)

John. Forgive ! O, pardon us,gentle father,

The crime lies with our mother,not with us.

Ele. Spare thy tongue the labour of recital,

I do confess it and glory in the deed
(Enter Mowbray and Lord de Clifford)

Hen. Good Heav'ns ! Lord Clifford,how can'st thou here ?

Ele. His tears may stop the current of his speech;

Thus then it is,'Twas I brought him hither,

'Twas I poison'd his daughter,thy mistress !

And 'twas revenge ! that urged me to this deed !

Hen. Poison'd ! - What my Rosamond dead ?

Mow. My liege, 'tis most true,

The noble Clifford here,have told me all,

Hen. For this deed,may'st thou stand for aye abhorr'd,

My Rose gone for ever ! the sweetest flow'r

That ere did kiss the bosom of the wind,

Or spread its fragrance in the May-morn sun !

Abandon'd woman -- (To the Queen)

Wem. When Harry First, my grandsire, reign'd your King;

And this poor crinkled map, now marks we out,

How your dominions did stand in Stephen's time,

Which now I blush indeed to look upon !

And thus at once do cancel and make void.
(Throws it on the ground)
In its place I restore again the first,
(takes it up and lays it down again)
And add thereto the whole of Picardy,

Anjou, and part of fertile Poictiers !

Besides one hundred fourscore thousand marks,

Which we now place within our treasury.

Thao. My tongue alone shall speak your people's thanks

Additions such as these do counterpoise

The crown with which you are invested now.

Hen. O wou'd my task were ended here ! but no,-

A judgment must be utter'd ere we part

In words so heavy, and so rude in sound,

As make my very heart indeed to weep.

Now Leicester ! bring hither that selfsame roll,

Which late in France we did think meet to pen.
(Leicester rises from his seat and delivers it
then returns to his place again)
Though well the seats around here are filled,

Yet some there are that cannot do appear,

Lacking their noble owners. Where is't ?

Hut silent all ! then my your leave I'll speak.
(Holds up the roll which Leicester gives him)
Herein is catalogued of all our Peers,

The titles and their separate dignities.

Hen. Bear her from my sight, lead her to prison,

Where let her pass the remnant of her days,

In penitence and pray'r,- Bear her hence, I say,-
(Guards lead her out)
And lead Earl Robert and Hugh Chester, straight

To execution - See, Mowbray, it be done.
(Mowbray leads out Chester and Leicester)
And as the crime most foul was not your own,

Be you my sons, Richard, John and Harry,

I here my pardon and forgiveness grant;

But for that ambitious King of Scots,

We hold him prisoner, until he pay us

Ten thousand marks, for ransom of his person.

See therefore, that he be strictly guarded,

Now we'll to Woodstock, take one last farewel,

Ere that my Rosamond be laid in earth;

Then cross the seas for France, where, as I hear,

They fain again wou'd seize on Normandy,

And curb our lion's glory.

FINIS.

Rosa. Indeed it were too soon to leave your Queen !

Your absence will engender in her mind

Some dark suspicion, which may ripen straight,

And bring forth jealousy, despair and rage !

Let not thus your Lovers blood o'erwhelm you !

We will there better for both of us.

I will be the jailer, lovers and bind thee

With forest flowers, feed thee with my kisses !

So then will we rul'd by many Harry !

Hen. Would I were a God !

Such ribbing, I'd that honour wore my crown !

I am content, do with me as thou wilt.

(Harm expands without)

This is the signal ---'tis Howard comes !

(Enter Howard)

Well, Howard what news ?

How. A messenger from Scotland is arriv'd !

The bringer and tidings o'th' good old Donald.

Hen. Alas ! what of him ?

How. Into thought my liege, he'll not live out the day.

Hen. My good old friend, my honest Counsellor,

Must I now lose thee ? must we part so soon ?

No horse then Howard ! I'll follow thee.

(Howard goes out)

Adieu, my love Farewell my Sentinel

(Kisses her)

Rosa. What kind was these things, my Harry, and so sweet

It seem'd as it wou'd challenge one of mine !

Hen. Then give it love !

(She kisses him)

Rosa. Thine ! will I keep so close within my lips,

A zephyr shall not dare intrude upon't !

EPILOGUE

If from our Play returning to your homes,
Ye chance to read this story as 'tis writ;
And find our Harry cross the seas for France,
Our Becket unto Rome for succour fly,
Thence unto Louis'court to meet his king;
Where friends ye find,this haughtypriest once more
Invited home unto his dignities.
When this ye read,do not your author blame;
He cou'd not not bear ye on swift lightnings wing,
O'er billowing seas,deserts and gay towns;
Or shew within the compass of one hour,
The business of a twenty summer's course;
Yet shou'd ye frown,look back upon his Play,
And let our Harry's courage and sweet love,
Forgiveness beg for his o'erleaping time.
Our haughty and ambitious Becket too,
Shall plead the lack of place: Yet after all,
Shou'd any present still remain unkind,
And carry with him to his nightly couch,
The frown of discontent;O,shou'd this be;
Then think how much the writer here hath toil'd
To please,and show in this our Harry's reign,
The pride and glory of our English land,
The unstain'd thunder of our regal lion;
No brow so rough,but sure will smooth at this,
No frown so black,but will to sweetness turn,

Rosa. When thou return'st, I'll give it back again.

Hen. Farewell ! adieu !

Exit.

A CHAMBER.

(Theobald in a Bed sleeping, - Becket seated by him.)

Beck. The dying man, that can thus sweetly sleep,
Must wear a soul within this outward flesh,
That knows no sin - how gently heaves his breast,
All cover'd with the silky snow-white beard;
He smiles as if an angel kiss'd his lips,
And whispe r'd him of joys that were to come !
Sweet soul ! thou hast an everlasting seat,
A throne in Heav'n above. You'd men but look,
And see a sight like this, they were all blest !
Sin wou'd grow out of date, wou'd be forgot !

(Enter Henry)

Hen. How does the good old man ?

(Becket rises)

Beck. He sleeps my liege !

Hen. And looks as sweet as any new-born babe !
Methinks the register of men's bad debs
Bears not one stain from any deed of thine;
And if it did, thou hast been penitent,
And dropp'd so many tears for the offence,
That clean the blot is wash'd away; O ! joy,
To find that virtue hath so much reward,
As thus to smile even on death itself
That angel, who ranks first in Heav'n above,

And bright as sun when bursting from the East,
Drive night away.--yet why intreat ye thus ?
No more ! no more ! ye smile and look so sweet,
I'll to our young and trembling author say,
Ye heard,ye smiled,and did applaud the Play.

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Hen. Of whom the greater part to us seem true;
Yet damned treason hath been meddling here
And smear'd the names of some we tender'd most;
Where is Earl Randlph ? where's the Lord Ftzhugh ?
Lord John,Lord Owen;and the Lord Fitz Urse,
Besides some Knights and orders of less note,
That should be present ? Why answer they not ?
Theo. We wou'd,but dare not plead in their behalfs.
Hen. Be it made known,the five we here did name
Guilty of blackest treason,we pronounce ! -
For,that they did 'gainst me their lawful King,
With hell-hatch'd treason,wantonly conspire !
Aiding the proud ambitious Stephen !
If one of them within our realm be found,
On him an hundred marks we will bestow,
That,or alive or dead,brings him before us;
As for the rest,that rather were drawn in,
(for that their betters led them on the way)
Our gracious pardon unto such we grant !
But we shall tent them close;if they do flinch,
Why then they look for mercy but in death !
Now let the drum and trumpet speak our joy,
The rest be feasting,mirth and revelry.
(Takes Eleanor's hand,they retire in the order in which they entered)